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Free Your Mind*

P'an Ku Pics

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to this latest issue of P'an Ku. This is my first issue as editor, and what a great time I have had putting it together! My staff and I started out with an abyss of nothingness for ideas, and we ended up with an issue that we believe represents its time and its artists.

The theme is life and nature and the beauty of these phenomena. They are what, in one way or another, inspire the artist in us all

We also have three new additions to the basic makeup of the magazine, Free Your Mind , P'an Ku Pics and wRites of Spring. The Free Your Mind section features works that cause the reader to think more deeply about subjects that affect us all, but are not so easily discussed.

P'an Ku Pics is our way of showing the readers who these wonderfully talented BCC artists and authors are. Ten of the artists were randomly chosen to represent the people behind this issue's works.

The wRites of Spring Section includes the winners of a North Campus two-day festival by the same name. This event is dedicated to the memory of Bob Meeker, and it involves an assemblage of various seminars devoted to writing.

I would like to thank all of the students who submitted their work. Unfortunately, there are not nearly enough pages to feature all of the wonderful work that was submitted. Thanks to you, a wonderful staff and an extremely patient advisor, I believe that this is a truly enjoyable issue. I also want to thank Anthony Berger and the special people in the staff's lives for being so understanding of our horrendous hours. I hope that you will have half as much fun reading it as we had putting it together. Have fun, and keep the creativity flowing through the summer!

Always enjoy the beauty of life and nature.

Editor
Danay Escanaverino

Head Games

by: Gerard Pucciello

Albert Desormeaux lay his head down on the cold New England sidewalk, bunching up the newspaper to give him an extra layer of separation from the hard, cracked concrete he so often called his bed. A.D., or After Death to his street friends; one look at him showing in fine color what represented life after, ran a dirt-smeared half-gloved right hand across his running nose, rubbing whatever nature deposited on his glove onto his pants.

A.D. tried to cover himself as best he could from the flurries and 'unseasonably' cold spring night. But this being New England, A.D. thought, unseasonable meant nothing short of hell. When it can snow in May, A.D. figured it could piss 10W-40 in December if it had mind to. He struggled with the Army surplus blanket until he finally had it up to his chin. There he gripped it with his teeth and held on as a strong northeast wind threatened to strip it from him again, and he was damned if he was going to get back into his wheelchair to chase down the old, ripped piece of cloth. A.D. held firmly as the gust subsided. He didn't think he could possibly take more of this wind. The cold sure as hell wasn't a bargain, he thought, but it wasn't life threatening; he had lived through colder nights....

He drifted back to that day he had been discharged from the rehabilitation hospital. He and a few buddies, other "users," which was the inside joke if you were confined to a wheelchair, had pulled an

all-nighter at Falmouth's best. Most of the other users had family with them looking after their needs. But A.D. never mentioned that he didn't have a place to go, that his family had abandoned him after his accident because they did not want to admit to themselves that their son was never going to live up to their presumptions. So he left alone that winter night to find another spot to satisfy his thirst.

Not realizing how cold it was, A.D. had struggled to keep the chair moving. Pushing down an ice covered obscure side street, A.D. drunkenly swerved his imprisonment swearing at the gods he wondered what he had done to deserve such a fate. Looking up at the

skies with tear-filled eyes, he missed seeing the edge of the road. The wheels caught at the edge of the asphalt and frozen grass, and A.D. was thrown out and over. The road held no land where he was pitched out and A.D. landed at the bottom of an eight foot slope. Twenty hours later he was found at the bottom of the slope in minus degree weather. The result

was the loss of both feet and three fingers on his left hand.

His life now even more fragmented, he began a nightmarish odyssey from one government housing project to another, with the only constant in his life being the peace and solace he found in his booze. Twelve years later he headed for the streets.

What mattered to him these days was insignificant. The sooner the end came the better. The only problem, he thought, was the feel of death engulfing him like a swarm of bees. It wasn't the fear of death, it was the fear of feelings; no emotion, no room for pain, loneliness and fear.

A.D. laughed that 'who gives a shit' laugh, "yeah, a fearless,

...and he was
damned if he was
going to get back
into his wheelchair...

painless, loveless mook, set free on a non-committal guideless tour in search for a god, any god, that could give meaning to the term 'emotion.' And somehow explain if left with nothing in this existence why this whole life thing makes a friggin' difference anyway." He shivered as he pulled the worn covering over his head, time to rest. After all, there would be plenty of time to die tomorrow.

§

The night came much too slow for Dr. Rojer Shays. A stout believer of work before play, he never touched alcohol before 6:00 P.M., but today was such a disaster the good doctor did all he could possibly do to keep from raiding the liquor cabinet long before his designated time.

Now sitting in his kitchen, he poured himself a double of Old Crow whiskey, held it up level with his eyes, sighed wearily, and shot it down. Focusing through watering eyes, teeth clenched, he didn't hesitate in pouring a second. Bringing the glass up to eye level, which had become sort of a superstitious ritual of his, he sighed wearily and shot down his Almighty. Fumbling in his rumpled doctor's lab coat, he pulled out a Chesterfield, lit it, and savored the feel of the nicotine envelop-

ing his lungs. The good doctor wasn't all the way there yet, but he was starting to feel the engine give a kick or two.

Leaning back on the legs of the kitchen chair, Dr. Rojer Shays put his feet up on the littered kitchen table and let out a full thirty seconds of expletives.

"Oh, for God's sake why me, why, son of a bitch...why....oh, damn you, Rojer! I'm trying, it's not as if *"I'm the one giving up, I need a break, just one little claim on my side."*

Dr. Shays poured still another two-fingered shot but left it on the table as he thought about today, and how he almost, almost, had reached that point of ecstasy that only research doctors can reach when they near that final stage of attaining their ultimate goal.

The person his assistant had obtained for him seemed so right; a combination of good looks, and a seemingly strong desire to rid himself of his ever burdening physical problem. But somewhere in that brain of his he lacked that intangible something that the good doctor always coveted over all else, and God! he was pissed at himself for missing it during THE interview; the willingness to live. A seemingly small request considering he gave them life back into lifeless, deformed bodies.

"I never saw it coming, but I'll know next time...so help me, there's not going to be a recurrence." Dr. Shays slapped the table with the palm of his hand to emphasize his frustration.

Dr. Rojer Shays knew it was only a matter of time until he reached the pinnacle of his personal quest. For six years while working under the tutelage of his idol, Dr. Winston Barrow, he had successfully reattached severed limbs. Every conceivable detail was worked on and perfected.

"The greatest satisfaction comes from personal conquest, not team conquest," Dr. Barrow would whisper to Dr. Shays in more personal moments, "regardless, and in spite of who lands on his face in the process."

Those words were the most poignant and truthful words Dr. Shays could ever remember hearing. He had learned so much from Dr. Barrow and had achieved so much personal growth he regarded his own work as an extension of Dr. Winston Barrow.

For two years Dr. Winston Barrow had been in failing health, heart failure and emphysema contributing to his being bedridden much of the day and night. He was overseeing the research project but not actively join-

ing in any of the operations. This was when Dr. Barrow decided to move on to the final stage of what he referred to as his "shoot or be shot research." because of the no win implications.

Dr. Barrow needed a healthy seventy year old man for the operation, much of his own size. Dr. Barrow knew his protege was ready, but more so, he knew he himself was running out of time. He must be ready. Dr. Shays, feeling the immediate rush of independence and overwhelming confidence bestowed on him, wasted no time in granting his mentor what seemed his final wish....

The transfer of Dr. Winston Barrow's severed head onto the healthy, retired dock worker, as Dr. Shays recollected over his sixth Old Crow double, should have put him on a course of perfection by now. After all, no one, including himself, imagined Dr. Barrow would live five weeks. The operation gave Dr. Winston Barrow two full weeks of cognizant thought which helped smooth out some of the rough areas for Dr. Shays. But that was three years ago, and even though the medical aspect of the procedure advanced well, the intangible X-factor-non-compliance on the patient's part - remained his obstacle.

Dr. Shays shed a few tears every time he privately reminisced about the great doctor. He had been such a brave man to allow the head transfer, and Dr. Shays could only feel an enormous amount of guilt that he failed Dr. Barrow with the procedure. He kept telling himself that it wasn't his fault, that Dr. Barrow lived, period. But solace didn't come in those thoughts, solace didn't even come in his alcohol it just made him think more, and thinking was beginning to

...I still hold
what you
would no
doubt kill
for...

drive him up a demon covered wall. No, the only form of solace that was going to drive away these demons forever was a successful transfer, and damn it, Dr. Rojer Shays thought, as he lifted his seventh Old Crow, sighed, then shot it down, there's got to be somebody out there willing....

ξ

A.D. waited in front of the package store until someone felt sorry enough to lend him a couple of bucks. It no longer bothered him worrying about other people's opinions and judgments concerning his disability. His days of pride were much like the Roman Empire, its existence crumbling under its own weight.

A.D. scored on only the third ask of the morning. Times they sure are a changin', he thought.

"One cheap bottle of Boone's Farm will get me through early evening, then who knows, but of course, now is now, and then is then, and Brunhilde never sang a duet with Libera..."

A.D. wasn't aware he was talking out loud until he glanced up and saw the man who was kind enough to fill out his prescription bending down and staring at him intently.

"Your needs run deeper than just a bottle of cheap wine, young man."

"Look pal, your kindness is unquestionable, but your psychological outline of me, to tell the truth, I don't need."

The man ran a yellow cigarette stained hand through his thinning gray hair. "Thank you for your bluntness, young man. You don't find much of that these days. For that I apologize, it was uncalled for I agree. It is not my intention to get off on the wrong foot with you. That would be most unfortunate, but....as you can see I still hold what

you no doubt would kill for right about now as I can attest so as the Indian's used to say, 'the ball is in my court.' You seem like a very intelligent man which is something once again that is rare to find and it would be most inappropriate if I was to run off and leave you without knowing you better which is most rude...."

"Slow down, man, your mouth runs...what the hell do you want," A.D. interrupted.

"Honestly, just to get to know you more, maybe help, call it my penance. You look in rough shape, maybe haven't had a bath in a while, and you probably could use a bit of food to soak up the booze. I'll look at those stumps of yours, could use a good cleaning, I'm guessing, patch up old wounds..."

"You a doctor, or some-kind-of-weirdo, or both! And why the interest in me?"

"Yes, I am, a doctor, that is, and no, I'm not a 'weirdo,' as you say. My name is Dr. Rojer Shays. My interest is purely humane, and definitely medical...and of course some company and conversation cannot harm the spirit. A sandwich, clean clothes, some talk, can't hurt...what do you say?"

"You must be a lonely man, Dr..."

"Shays, Dr. Rojer, with a J, Shays. May I ask yours?"

"You may, if you must. Albert Desormeaux. My close friends call me A.D. for short."

"Nice to meet you Albert, here's the bottle you ordered. If we hurry my maid might still have breakfast in the skittle, sound good? I am right around the corner..."

There are times in a person's life where one must accept an outpouring of kindness, and, believe it or not, A.D. thought, this Dr. Shays is more of a lost soul than I am. A.D. felt he was doing the doctor more good than vice-versa.

He wasn't a bad person after all, A.D. decided, and what the hell, he had to admit it was sort of good to have a warm shower, some food that didn't come from a trash container, and conversation that didn't include your 'mutha.' Maybe, just maybe, A.D. guessed, he could get to like this fool doctor with the running diction.

"Can I be so bold as to ask what happened to you, A.D.," Dr. Shays stopped short. "I apologize, may I call you A.D., Albert?"

A.D. poured down another shot of Old Crow, no reason to drink rot gut Boone's Farm

now, he smiled comfortably, nodding his head in approval. Why not? If it makes the crazy fool practitioner happy all the power to him.

After showering and eating a breakfast that was equal to his last three weeks' meals all together, A.D. sat untroubled at the doctor's littered kitchen table. The maid must be off today, A.D. thought...not really any of my concern, he decided.

Together they began a methodical, well-practiced, dissection of the whiskey placed in front of them.

"Thirteen years ago I was in an automobile accident, broke my neck, was paralyzed, end of story. No bright lights, no song and dance routine, no made-for-television-drama-tear-jerker-starring-Jimmy Smits. No sir, Dr. Shays, my story reeks of dullness. In and out of hospitals for a decade. In and out of housing projects. A bout with frostbite. Amputation of my feet, my fingers. Alcoholism. Lost love. Lost family...stop me when I bore you...lost self-esteem. Lost desire to live...of life. Basically lost Me."

They both sat in silence as Dr. Shays poured two shots of whiskey, and savored the taste of the liquor warming their insides.

A.D. continued, "You see Doc, I've

had a few years to understand that the base, the foundation of life, isn't what you have, or what you don't have...it's what you had, and what you don't have *now*. That's what kills people, what drives people to become what I am today. You're born with nothing, but you can't live with nothing...food, clothing, love. You can go without for years, but then somebody such as yourself comes along and lights a fire under your needs and emotions again. All of a sudden you're yearning to become something you were another lifetime ago. You follow me? Today for the first time in, God, I don't know when, I looked at myself because you looked at me! I'm still a person, but I'm trapped in *this*." A.D. swept his right hand down his body. "But the worst part about this is I hate myself even more now. Oblivious to my situation was better than any kind of therapy anyone could invent. Life sucked, doc, but I didn't know why. Now I know why! You shall feel no worse pain than when reality becomes an illusion then becomes a reality."

"Are you telling me, A.D., that today, less than three hours ago, you could care less about life. But now, because of a little show of affection on my part, things are in focus and what you see disgusts you. Reality is what you have been through, A.D.. But realities, like lives, can be altered. The mere possibility of knowledge of something influences the nature of its reality. By that I mean you can still have a reality *and* an illusion at precisely the same time, if you create or already possess a knowledge, a consciousness, an awareness..."

More silence. More whiskeys.

"But that's exactly what I mean, Doc. My fantasies kept me incapable of opening up the reality window. So by keeping the facts away my life was being performed

by an unknown. Today the unknown returned. I'm not sure I like the surprise visit."

"But I, A.D., have in my possession the key to change all that..."

Dr. Shays poured two more whiskeys, both drinking them before the liquor had settled in their glasses. He noticed his breathing had become accelerated with excitement. This was it, by golly, he felt it, the one that would help him reach research orgasm. Things were moving unexpectedly smoothly. He hadn't planned on telling his friend so soon, but, years in the research field had taught him one lesson: expect the unexpected.

Again silence. Again whiskey.

"I have the knowledge to change your reality, to create an illusion that is a reality. I can give you peace from your nightmares."

A.D. suddenly felt like a body floating slowly to the bottom of a pool. Waves of vertigo enveloping him, up became down. Too much all at once. Something he recalled, sensory overload, he guessed it was called, was much as this was.

Things here were surely different.

"Please....explain."

"Limb reattachment."

"You're going to give me new legs, Doc." A.D. threw back his head and laughed aloud. "I don't mean to be a pessimist, my new friend, but as a doctor you should know my paralysis isn't going to change with new legs. Your idea, and thanks for caring, stinks."

"Do not, young man, insult me with your layman understanding of my medical practices. I'm quite aware of the severity of your paralysis, so if you allow me the op-

...I have the
knowledge to
change your
reality...

portunity to fully explain without puerile out-breaks you will know my intentions.”

Silence.

Dr. Shays in his anger over poured the whiskey. A.D.’s eyes transfixed on the slow, methodical drip of the liquor off the side of the table, landing in a silent splash on the linoleum beside his wheelchair. What fun, he thought, to sit on a drop and land harmlessly about...

He continued.

“I have revolutionized and perfected the total and complete replacement of a human’s head onto another’s body. I know you must think I am not real when I speak of this, but I speak the truth. My excitement stems from the fact that I think of you as a great candidate. You seem to possess the intelligence to comprehend the significance of the procedure, and the willingness to return to someone you were. The possibility of gaining complete freedom from your wheelchair, of once again having total independence back in your life, does that not exhilarate you!”

This took the cake, A.D. thought. Over the years he had been preached to and promised complete recovery by born-again, Hare Krishnas, palm readers, numerologists,

herb salesmen, faith healers. He guessed many more that had slipped his mind over the years. A “complete replacement...” The words hung in the air and evaporated like steam above a teapot. Why, then, did he feel that Dr. Shays wasn’t joking. That Dr. Shays, if given the opportunity, could actually perform this procedure...and perform it correctly. Experience should tell him differently.

Silence. Whiskey.

Maybe it was the alcohol, but A.D.’s blood was pumping with excitement. He wanted, *needed* to change gears. Last night he put off death for the God-knows-umpteenth-time, no reason to live like a scared cub. Face death, A.D., no more time remains to contemplate.

“Do it, you scared piece of __,” A.D. mumbled, “go ahead, Doc, I’m listening.”

Dr. Shays explained.

§

“I’ve done it. Dr. Rojer Shays, you’re a certified genius. Absolutely fantastic, incredible.”

Dr. Rojer Shays took two stairs at a time running upstairs from his cellar laboratory towards the liquor cabinet in his kitchen. He shot a sideways glance at the clock hang-

ing from its wires off the kitchen wall.

5:40 A.M..

“This is definitely the time, no doubt about it,” he said, accentuating the ‘no.’

He grabbed the Old Crow from the cabinet with shaking, yet sure hands. Pulling a dirty juice (whiskey) glass from the sink, he poured himself a generous amount of liquor, stood at the still littered kitchen table, and drank to his newfound brilliance.

“It took a while, by George, but I knew, just damn well knew, that this was it. Like another drink, Dr. Genius, I mean Dr. Rojer Shays?” He laughed so hard he choked and spasmed.

For three weeks after the head-transfer he wasn’t sure if A.D. was going to pull through. From sunup to sundown he kept a vigil by A.D.’s side. This was his baby, and only his. He knew he was in for a long haul, but God, he thought, it was worth every bit of his blood, sweat, and tears.

At 5:31 A.M., Albert Desormeaux had opened his eyes for the first time.

“I imagine he must be thirsty or hungry.”

Dr. Shays filled up a bowl with water, grabbed a piece of white bread from his re-

frigerator, and hurried down the cellar stairs.

Things don't always go as planned, he thought, on his descent to his laboratory. But that's what research is all about; angles aren't always measurable, and new discoveries lead to even newer research. Realities aren't always black and white!

Dr. Shays placed the bowl of water and bread next to A.D.'s head.

He passionately cradled A.D.'s head in his hands, speaking soothingly. "Halfway out of the woods, not all the way, but better than none, A.D."

After all, he swore, A.D. moved his paw this morning.

What more could he ask for!

What a delight!



ABSOLUTELY by Robyn Cicero

Midnight

by: Treasa Nelson

Birds chirp, sun peeks through blinds
Stirring, a single paw taps my nose.
I roll over, it can't be time,
like sandpaper, her tongue
against my eyelids cannot be ignored.
Nuzzling her face against my nose,
the long hair tickles.
No need for an alarm clock.

Poised at the food bowl
she'll get every kernel
even the ones that hit the floor.
I join her in breakfast,
I have milk,
suddenly her breakfast interests change.
A single paw taps my bowl,
emerald eyes plead with me
to save her a drop.
Content, she mounts the windowsill
her hair glistens, eyes squint,
still, like a sphinx, queen of the house.

Verbal Abuse

by: Ellen Lois Schiman

IF, I strain my brain to analyze
Creative works which symbolize
With central themes in such disguise
There's nothing I can recognize...
The authors never sympathize.
BUT, ere I dare to criticize
Or try to make them realize
That maybe I could visualize
If only they'd familiarize...
They just refuse to compromise.
THEN, they take great pains to emphasize
They feel no need to generalize,
Nor improvise, nor summarize,
Nor otherwise homogenize...
Their efforts they would Lionize.
SO, they cite their *right* to fantasize,
Idealize and rhapsodize.
A "license" they won't jeopardize
By using words that harmonize...
In place of those which tantalize.
AND, if I *still* think otherwise
They promise not to agonize.



COLONY HOTEL by: Mark Cleary

Questions Left Unanswered

by: Shiakema George

Dear Mother,

Where have you gone leaving me alone
to face the world on my own without you?
Who is going to be there to answer my questions about life?

“ Why is the sky blue and the grass green?....”

“ Where do babies come from?....”

“ What do I say to make him stay?....”

Who is going to teach me to be a mother, or a friend...

To make sure that my lipstick isn't too bright

My clothes aren't too tight

My

dreams

will come true?

The End of an Era

by: Bentley N. Williams

Gone are the days,
Of spit shined boots,
Glistening in the sun.

Rifles with fixed bayonets swung,
In precision drills,
To sharpen skills.

Dress greens, formations,
Standing endlessly at attention Waiting for the
command; at ease!
So I can breathe normally again.

The days, cold and wet,
As we bivouacked to understand the environment,
In which we might some day fight.

The esprit de corp shared
As duty bound we guarded
The heart of our survival; our selves.

The lessons taught and learned in battle,

When all we could depend on,
Was ourselves, our training,
And our belief that our cause was right,
And hoping that the Hand of God
Would guide us safely home again.

The fears as a beloved friend died,
A comrade, one with whom we had just seen,
Spoken to or joked,
Gone as the wind's icy chill,
At winter's end.

The tears, the pain, the laughter
Conflicting emotions felt,
The price of achieving our objectives.
Strike hard, seize the initiative and hold,
Our motto, and duty and honor bound us to it.

Gone even are the nostalgic feelings in our hearts
And the pride and love that held us together,
Now all we have left are the memories,
Proud that we served, protected, and defended,
The pride of our hearts,
The land called U.S.A.



NERIAGE by: Susan Maquire

Crazy About You

by: Dave Barry

Amanda took her eyes off the road for just a second to reach into the Burdines bag on the floor of the passenger side of her Camaro. Unable to immediately find the small jewelry box amidst the other assorted goods, she glanced back at Flamingo Road just in time to see the bus in front of her rumbling to a halt to discharge passengers at the Sunrise Boulevard intersection. She emitted a quick gasp, and swerved sharply into the center lane, hoping like hell she wasn't about to side-swipe some tractor trailer. Luck was with her, and after narrowly missing the bus' rear bumper she stepped hard on the accelerator and pushed the Chevy past seventy-five in order to catch the yellow light some fifty yards ahead. The light turned to red a full two seconds before she passed under it, but she'd be damned if she wasn't going through that. She shot through the intersection and gunned it south, her hands locked to the steering wheel in a death grip. She resigned herself to having to wait until the next red light to fetch the necklace from the bag, praying she would have enough time to wrap it and the other presents before 9:30.

Jesus, Peggy, she thought. You may have done me a favor when you called me about Kevin, but it would have been nice if you could have given me some warning! I've only got twenty-five, no make that twenty minutes to get to the airport. I'll never make it on time, let alone wrap these goddamn gifts!

She gathered the wrapping paper, scissors and tape on her lap and tossed them into the bag to be used on the presents later, God

willing, and contented herself with inspecting her reflection in the rear-view mirror. With only an hour and a half to prepare for this meeting with Kevin, she hadn't had time to fix her wild black hair into any semblance of normalcy, and had simply pulled it back into a ponytail. Blue jeans and sneakers with a pink pullover was the best she could manage as she rushed to make the mall before going to the airport. She had darted from store to store, purchasing any item she thought might please Kevin, with no regard to her Visa balance which was now dangerously near her credit limit. After buying the wrapping paper and tape, she had rushed to her car desperately hoping that she could make it to the airport in time for Kevin's 9:30 flight. He had no idea she was coming to see him, Peggy had made that clear, and she didn't want him leaving the airport without knowing she was coming for him. She eased the accelerator down further while glancing at the dashboard clock. 9:12. Eighteen minutes left, and she wasn't even close to I-595 yet. Thanks a lot, Peggy!

She heard the siren behind her, and moved the mirror back to its normal position to reveal the red and blue lights rotating directly behind her. Shit, she breathed as she eased off the side of the road. This clinched it. She was going to miss Kevin's flight. He'd probably be long gone by the time she could get there. She cranked the window open as the stocky cop approached. He bent over to face her behind a pair of mirrored sunglasses.

"Good morning, miss. Do you know why I stopped you?"

Right to the point, she thought. Do I flirt? Cry? It probably doesn't matter now anyway.

"Yes, officer. I know I ran that red light. But I'm in such a hurry, you just don't know. It's my boyfriend, you see, he's..."

"Not only did you run the red, but I clocked you at over sixty miles an hour. I've met plenty of people along this stretch of road who are late picking up their boyfriends, girlfriends, whatever. Sometimes I meet them when I pull them out of the wreckage that used to be their cars. So save it, okay? License and registration please."

"Yes sir, but you don't understand. This is different. He's..."

"I also notice that you're not wearing your seatbelt. So miss, just give me your license and registration please. Save us both some time."

She sighed, and handed over the documents. The tears that began to roll down her cheeks were genuine, but even they didn't help. She waited sorrowfully while he filled out the ticket, and it was 9:23 when she finally pulled back onto the road. Driving ahead to the gas station at the next intersection, Amanda pulled up to the pay phone next to the car wash, and left the engine running as she grabbed a quarter from her ashtray. She walked hurriedly to the phone, lifted the handle, and dropped the coin in the slot as she fished into her jean's pocket and pulled out a crumpled piece of paper. She dialed the phone number she had scribbled there when Peggy had called and a cheerful operator answered.

"Delta Air Lines, Maryann speaking. Can I help you?"

"Yes, hi. I'm calling to check on the status of your 9:30 flight," she glanced at the paper again, "number 373."

She heard the faint tapping of fingers on a keyboard through the line, and Maryann said, "I'm showing that flight experiencing delays, ma'am."

"Delays?" Amanda blurted. Her heart jumped.

"Yes, unfortunately the thunderstorms throughout the Eastern

seaboard during the night have pushed most of our schedule back quite a bit. I do apologize for the delay. Flight 373 has been bumped back to approximately 10:25. Again, ma'am, I do apologize..."

Amanda hung up and raced back into her car. Thank God, she thought. There was plenty of time now. She swung the car back into the street and drove toward 595. Traffic was light, even for a Saturday, and she made good time as she headed for Fort Lauderdale International, mentally rehearsing all the things she was going to say to Kevin after their long, glorious embrace. It had been three months since she had seen him. It had felt like ten years.

She arrived at the airport, and was parked in the garage by 9:45. She removed the wrapping supplies from the bag, and began to withdraw items one by one, wrapping each in the neon green paper quickly but decoratively, then adding a pretty red or purple ribbon to each for effect. First the gold necklace was packaged, then the Sony Discman, followed by a bottle of Obsession, the silk shirt, the leather wallet, the Levi's 501's, and the Casio watch. After she finished, she lovingly placed each item back in the bag, and applied a quick dose of mascara and blush, and finally a generous amount of hot pink lipstick. She grabbed the bag, exited the car, and began walking to the terminal. Excitement coursed through her, and her hands were trembling slightly.

She walked through the automatic double doors, and checked the computer screen over head for the status on Flight 373. Delayed, naturally, and patrons were instructed to wait at Gate 17. Feeling as though her heart might explode, she briskly began to walk down the wide hallway, past Gates 10, 11, and 12. She knew everything she wanted to say. Why had it taken her so long to say it, she wondered.

This speech was one she should have made a long time ago. Pride can be such an awful thing, can't it? Thank God Peggy had called. If she hadn't, who knows what Kevin might have thought when she didn't show up for him. Amanda decided that she and Kevin would definitely have to take Peggy out for a nice dinner soon to thank her. But not tonight. No, Amanda had other plans for she and Kevin tonight.

She strode past Gates 14, past 15, past 16, and looked around. She didn't see him anywhere, but she knew he had to be there. The multitude of passengers grumbling and glancing angrily at their watches told her she was in the right place. Then she spotted him in a chair next to the far wall, reading a *Newsweek*. Her spirits soared.

"Kevin!" she squealed with delight across the crowded waiting area, and he, along with every other passenger, shot a surprised look in her direction. She began to race over to him.

He stood up as she approached, and his face took on an expression of shock and disbelief. She slammed into him and threw her arms around his strong back in a fierce bearhug. He mildly returned her embrace as

she pushed his thick brown hair away from his ear to whisper there, "Oh God, honey, I've missed you so much. I don't ever want us to be apart again. I'm sorry for what happened."

She buried her face in his chest, and gave him a squeeze. His look of bewilderment remained a moment longer, and he noticed that most of the passengers' eyes were upon them. He placed his hands on her shoulders and pushed her back, gently but with a fair amount of force to pry her off him. She blinked and smiled as she gazed lovingly into his deep auburn eyes.

"Amanda? What are you doing here? How did you..."

"Peggy called me. Isn't she great?" Kevin gritted his teeth slightly, and his eyes narrowed. "She thought I should know what you were doing," Amanda continued. "She's such a doll. We ought to have her over for lunch or something, maybe next Wednesday. I don't have class then, so we..."

"Amanda," he interrupted. "What the hell did you come here for?"

She looked at him, shocked, just for a moment, but quickly recovered. "Well, when I found out you were moving, I knew what you were doing. It's obvious. You're just try-

ing to teach me a lesson." She reached out and took his hands in hers, and moved closer to him. "Kevin, baby, I'm sorry for the way things were with us. It was my fault, I admit that. But that's over now. Things can go back to the way they were. I guess I've been waiting all this time for you to call me. You know how proud I can be. But believe me honey, I know I was wrong. But there's no need for you to fly all the way to Denver to make me realize that."

She batted her eyelids at him sweetly, and smiled. He simply stared at her, mouth agape, absorbing all this.

"Oh, look," she said, after a pause. "I brought you something. Well, actually, lots of somethings." She giggled as she reached into the bag by her feet and pulled out a perfectly wrapped box that she knew from its size was the necklace. She presented it to him proudly. "Here, open this one first."

Kevin took the box, regarded it for a moment, then reached down and placed it back into the bag. With one hand, he lifted the bag, and with the other, he took her roughly by her arm and began leading her out of the waiting area, away from prying ears. "C'mon, we have to talk."

"Kevin, what...honey where are you..." was all she could manage as he pulled her along to an empty bench near the duty-free shop. He sat her down next to him, and looked her squarely in the eye, his face stonelike and rigid.

"Amanda, we've been over this already. I don't know why you can't accept it, and I don't know why in the hell Peggy called you, but it's over between us. I told you that five months ago, and I've told it to you I don't know how many times since. We were never that close to begin with. Hell, we only went out for two months! I'm moving to Denver because that's where Cynthia's work is transferring her to, and after we get settled, I'm buying a ring so I can propose to her. Is any of this sinking in to you, Amanda?"

Her head lowered, and her shoulders slumped forward ever so slightly. Her lower lip was jutted out, and her eyes were beginning to mist. She began to shake her head from side to side, and responded loudly, "No, I don't believe you! I don't believe any of this. What we had was special! You know it and so do I. We were meant for each other!" She began screeching now, and he tried vainly to shush her as she continued. "You can't do this to me! You can't! You're just trying to test me. I know it! I love you, don't you understand? How can you do this to me? I BOUGHT YOU THESE PRESENTS!" She reached down and shook the bag before it fell from her grasp as she collapsed against him in a sob.

He wrapped his arms about her tightly, not so much to show affection as to quiet her. He smiled embarrassedly at the staring faces around them, and patted her back gently. He let her cry for some time before tenderly pushing her away and facing her.

"Look, Amanda, I'm sorry. You have to know that I've tried



SANDRA by: Jennifer Huleh-Day

my best not to hurt you. But I'm leaving on that plane in less than ten minutes, and you're just going to have to face it. We only dated for a little while. I'm truly sorry if I made it seem like it was anything more than it was, but you knew even then that I wasn't just seeing you. I was always totally honest with you. I never played games or toyed with you. But it's over now, Amanda. I love Cynthia, and I'm going to marry her." Amanda was shaking her head, her eyes shut tightly in denial as she tried to block out these words.

"No, you don't," she whispered. "You're just saying that. This is a test. It's a test of my love."

"No, Amanda, it isn't a test," he said sternly. "It's the truth. I don't love you." She shrieked as though she had been stabbed, and he grabbed her shoulders as he continued. "I never loved you. We just dated a little while, and that's it." Her lips were trembling badly now, and she lowered her head to hide her distress. His face softened as he continued. "Look Amanda, you're too special to act this way. You're beautiful, you're smart, you're funny, you've got a bright future. Don't waste your time dwelling on me. Just because we didn't work out, who cares? Get out there

and circulate. There'll be tons of guys, great guys, much better than a slob like me, just begging to get a shot at you."

She shuddered, and choked back a sob as she tried to get her composure back. The overhead speaker announced in a bored voice that Delta flight 373 to Denver would be departing shortly.

"Amanda? Amanda, are you okay? Can you look at me?"

She shamefully lifted her head to stare at him, mascara a black, smeared mess. She sniffled, and he grabbed a napkin from the table next to them and offered it to her. She dabbed at the corner of her eye and blew her nose quietly.

"Listen, I've got to go. That's my flight they just announced. But will you do me a favor. Please?"

She sniffled again, and looked at him softly.

"Go home. Take a long hot bath. Then go to the gym or to the beach or something. Anything to take your mind of me. Just do something that will make you feel better. I'd hate to go through this long flight thinking I left you miserable behind me. Okay? Would you do that for me? Amanda?"

He reached out, and gently placed his hand under her chin. She stared blankly at him.

"Friends?" he asked tenderly.

"Friends," she whispered painfully, returning her eyes to their downward gaze.

"Will you go out today and do something productive? Something that will make you feel better?"

She nodded slowly and affirmatively.

"Good. Now come here, for God's sake." He pulled her to him and embraced her warmly, and this time, it was her return hug that was weak. He patted her back twice, then pulled away and kissed her forehead. "I've got to go now. You take care, all right? Remember what I said. You're too special to waste your time dwelling on a clown like me. Go out and find some real lucky guy, make sure he's the right one for you, and then." he stood, bent over, lifted the bag, and shook it to rattle the gifts within. "...And then you give him these. Okay?" Again, her head nodded weakly. "Good. I'll, uh," he paused and bit his lip, "I'll always remember you. Goodbye friend."

He remained a moment longer, trying to read her emotional state. She remained on

the bench, back hunched, head bowed. He turned then, and walked away. Only then did she look up to watch him stroll down the long terminal, away from her and out of her life. He never looked back.

Amanda wasn't sure how long she sat there afterwards. For all she knew, it may have been ten minutes or could very well have been two hours. Travellers of all ages, races, and nationalities walked by her, and none of them had the slightest hint of the emotional turmoil she was undergoing. When she at last felt ready to move, it seemed as though it took all her strength to lift herself from her spot on the bench. With a numb expression on her face, she lifted the Burdines bag as of yet unwrapped offerings and proceeded down the terminal hallway, past magazine stands, coffee shops, florists, cigarette machines, rental car counters, and finally to the Delta departures desk, mercifully free of customers.

She strode up to the desk and cleared her throat. The pretty blonde clerk turned to face her.

"One ticket to Denver please, on your next available flight."
Her voice was strong and sure. "One way."

Hello

by: Diana Gonzalez

Hello, my darling Hello,
I come to be with you
the rest of my life.
And the only present I bring
to you is the honesty of my love.



MERMAN by: Zabrina Carpio

A Pair of Blue Skates

by: Angela Joseph

Jud pressed his nose against the window pane and looked out at the snow covered street. Cars were driving by slowly, their windshield wipers working with difficulty to keep the white stuff off the glass. The pavement was covered with snow about four feet high, and other familiar landmarks were barely distinguishable.

Across the street, a man came out and began clearing the sidewalk in front of his house. Soon he and his Mom would be doing the same thing. Snow had fallen early this year, and it was another reminder that Christmas, the season he loved and hated the most, was coming soon.

Schools were closed because of the bad weather, and Jud felt restless being cooped up alone in the apartment while his Mom went to work. His restlessness was not only due to his confinement, but to the thoughts that always kept cropping up in his mind around this time every year. Would his Dad spend Christmas with them this year?

He could not remember how old he was when he began to realize that his life was different from that of most of his friends. When he listened to Marty and other boys talk about their families he felt alone and different. Marty was his best friend and was about six months older than he. Marty was a bright boy, a good basketball player and Jud felt that if he had a brother, he would want him to be just like Marty.

Marty shared a home with his parents, an older brother, and his two year old baby sister. He, on the other hand, went home every day to an empty apartment, and waited until his mother, who worked

in a large department store, got home. Sometimes he would go out and play with the other kids in the park across the street, and he always felt more lonely when the time came for him to leave them. If only his Dad lived with them, he thought, then his Mom might have more kids and they would be a real family.

He remembered asking his Dad when he came to pay them one of his rare visits why he did not live with them. He had asked his Mom that once before and she had looked so distressed that he promised himself he would not ask her again. The adored his Mom and never wished to hurt her, so he had decided to ask his Dad. His father had averted his face, and mumbled something unintelligible.

As Christmas drew nearer, Jud's anxiety began to rise again. He was not worried about presents, because his mother always saw to it that he got whatever he wanted, and he knew his Dad would bring him something, but the greatest present he could think of was his father spending Christmas with them. He had stopped believing in Santa Claus long ago, but his Mom had always told him that if people prayed hard enough for something, God would give it to them. Maybe he would try prayer. Then a thought occurred to him, and he rushed into the kitchen where his mother was preparing dinner.

"Mom, do you think I can ring Dad?" he asked.

His mother turned around, startled. "Why do you want to do that, honey?" she asked.

"Well, I thought, maybe I could call him and...and..."

"Go on," his mother prompted.

"Well, I wanted to ask him if he would spend Christmas with us this year."

"Oh honey," that distressed look was in her eyes again, and he

hated himself for causing it. "Come here," she said seating herself on a chair and holding her arms out to him. He went and leaned against her and she cradled him. "I never told you this before, Jud, but your father looks after his sick mother and it's impossible for him to get away very often, especially at Christmas time."

"Oh," he said slowly, "why didn't you say so before?"

Then he had another brilliant idea. "So she is my grandmother," and as his mother did not reply he continued, "then we could go spend Christmas with them."

"No!" His mother shouted so hard that he jumped away from her embrace. "I...I'm sorry, honey, I didn't mean to shout at you like that, but it's just not possible."

Jud turned away puzzled, and he went slowly back to his room. Something was not right, he thought. Was she telling him the truth? It had to be the truth, he thought, my Mom does not lie. The next evening when his mother came home she called out to him, "Jud, I have some great news for you."

"What, what is it, Mom?" he asked eagerly.

"You remember Doug who took us

to the beach last summer? Well, he's coming to spend Christmas with us."

"Oh," he replied, his face falling. "I didn't know you were seeing him."

"I'm not seeing anyone. I see him at work every day, that's all, and since he lives alone, I thought it would be nice to invite him over for Christmas, because he was kind enough to take us out."

"Oh..." the boy replied, not knowing what else to say.

"You liked him, didn't you?" his Mom asked, looking at him anxiously.

"Yeah, but it's just that I want my Dad to spend Christmas with us, you know, like a real family."

"Oh, honey," she held him close as the tears stung his eyes. "We can't always have what we want."

Jud tried his best to put on a cheerful face when Doug came on Christmas Day. It was not difficult because Doug was a pleasant, easy-going person, and Jud could not help thinking how simple life would have been if he had been his father. He was so unlike his father that Jud smiled at the contrast. While his father was tall and athletic, Doug was short and rather weak looking; his father walked with

quick, agile movements, as if he could not bear to waste time on anything; Doug's movements were slow and careful as if time mattered very little. He was obviously in love with his mother, but in his child's mind, Jud sensed that his mother did not share the same feeling.

Doug helped him assemble the train set he had bought him, and later, they lay on the floor and played with it like two kids. By the time Doug left that night, Jud was actually sorry to see him go. His father had not called, and he feared that he might not be visiting them after all.

As he was getting ready for bed, he heard the sharp knock on the door, and he knew instantly it was his Dad. Wearing only his pajamas, he flew into the living room. "Dad, Dad," he shrieked, and flung himself against the tall man, whose impressive figure seemed to fill the whole room.

"Hi, son," his father replied, holding him off to look at him. "My, you are becoming a big boy. I'm sure you'll be able to put this to good use," and he held out a shopping bag.

As Jud delved into the shopping bag, he heard his father say, "Merry Christmas, Lynn." His mother's name was Lynnette, but

his father called her Lynn.

"Merry Christmas, Ben," then he heard no more as he removed the gleaming new skates from the box and shrieked excitedly, "Dad! It's just what I wanted. Thanks, Dad."

"Glad you like it, son. Try them on."

He did, and they were a perfect fit. But as he got up and tried to move in them, he fell flat on his buttocks. They all laughed, and his mother said, "You can't use them in here, Jud, you'll scratch the floor."

Then his father surprised him by saying, "How would you like me to take you to the skating rink tomorrow to try out your new skates?"

Jud's eyes widened. Was he hearing correctly, or maybe he was dreaming. His mouth opened but no sound came.

"Well..." his father laughed, "how about it?"

"Would you really?" he said at last, "Oh yes, yes, Dad," and he hugged his father while his mother beamed at them.

The next evening when his father came to pick him up Jud could barely contain his joy. However, he sobered up slightly when he realized that his mother was not going with them. He felt puzzled, then guilty at going out and having fun and leaving her at home. She kissed him on the cheek and said, "Have a good time, hon, and tell me all about it when you get back."

That evening was one that Jud would remember for a very long time. Under his father's skillful guidance, he mastered the rudiments of skating in a relatively short time, and soon he was skating around the rink with the other kids, laughing and having a lot of fun. All too soon it was time for them to leave, but his father promised that he would take him skating again soon.



PLAYGROUND AFTERMATH by Jennifer Sawyer

As they drove home, the atmosphere between them was warm and companionable. His father was clearly in a good mood, for he told him stories and jokes about his childhood and laughed when Jud told him some of his own jokes. The thought of his father's childhood recalled something to Jud's mind and he said, "Tell me about my grandmother, Dad. Is she very sick?"

The air suddenly became fraught with tension and it was as if the chill from outside had somehow crept into the car. There was silence, during which Jud feared that he had annoyed his father, then finally, he answered, "Yes, she's very sick."

No more was said and the journey ended in silence.

Soon the holidays were over and Jud was back at school. He was glad to see his friends again, especially Marty. He was anxious to tell him about his new skates, and to hear about Marty's Christmas. His chance came during the lunch break as they were sitting on one of the stone benches in the courtyard. Jud said idly, "I sure wish it was still Christmas, don't you, Marty?"

That was Marty's cue to begin to talk about all the wonderful things he and his fam-

ily had done for Christmas, and all the presents he had received. Jud's ears perked up when he heard Marty say, "...and Dad took me and Robin to the skating rink."

"Yeah?" Jud put in. "Well my Dad bought me a pair of skates and took me skating, too!"

There, it felt good to be even with Marty for once, if only in a small way.

"I got a new pair of skates, too!" Marty said.

Feeling his triumph, Jud continued, "My Dad says he's going to take me skating every weekend."

"My Dad takes me skating and fishing," came the rejoinder.

Jud had nothing to say to that and Marty continued to boast about his wonderful holidays. Then he opened his book bag and took out an envelope. Inside it were photographs, obviously of Marty's family. Marty took one out and held it out to Jud. It was a picture of his baby sister. He looked at the picture of the chubby little girl holding out her arms to a woman, whose back was turned to the camera.

"Isn't she cute?" his friend asked.

Jud nodded and smiled, unable to say

anything for the strange tightening in his throat. There were other pictures of Marty and Robin, of the baby, April and her mother, and then Marty was saying, "...and my Dad's friend took this one of the whole family on Christmas Day."

Jud took the picture from Marty and immediately his eyes fell on the pair of skates in the foreground. The picture was taken on the front lawn, and the blue skates were lying on the grass in front of Marty and his brother who were stooping.

"Those skates are just like mine!" he exclaimed. "Except for the stripes."

The skates in the picture bore two black stripes, while his had none.

Jud continued to stare at the skates, then his eyes traveled up to the faces of Marty's parents. His mother was holding baby April by the hand and...Jud blinked then swallowed while a slow pounding began somewhere in his cerebral cortex. Was he seeing things? No, it couldn't be true. He closed his eyes and opened them again. The face was still the same; the face of the tall man with his arm around Marty's mother, smiling straight at him was his Dad.

As if from a distance he heard his friend

saying. "Jud, what is it? Come on, talk to me, Jud."

Without a word he flung the picture to the ground as the scream welled up in his throat. The startled gaze of his friends and teachers followed him as he began to run. People called his name, but he appeared not to hear. He ran for what seemed like hours, heedless of where he was going, but his footsteps took him in the direction of his home. Mechanically, he took the lift to their apartment, then like a zombie he unlocked the door and stumbled blindly into the hallway, still seeing his father's face smiling at him. His foot stumbled over something, and as he put out his hand to steady himself, he looked down. It was a pair of blue skates.

With or Without You

by: Shiakema George

The alarm went off,
I got out of bed,
I showered,
And I breathed.
I washed my face,
I brushed my teeth,
I got dressed,
And I breathed.
I made some coffee,
I ate,
I left for work,
And I breathed.
I drove down familiar roads,
I turned down the streets,
I parked my car,
And I breathed.
The morning wore on,
so did the afternoon.
Day turned to night,
And I breathed.
I use to wonder
how I'd live
without you,
And then I breathed.



Untitled by: Teri Lurie

Nuclear Age

by: Ellen Lois Schiman

From cracks in the sidewalk
green things grow.
Ants and earthworms
tunnel the soil,
and time moves swift
and silent.

Invisible,
as all growing things grow,
on the surface of the world.

Human beings come,
and go.

Living, Living, Living
Everyone loves a garden,
everyone loves to see the
shapes
and colors
as birds and bees play.

On this loveless earth
the humans have
created love.

Only creatures that live
in love possess real power,
possess life.
the miracle of birth goes
on and on.

The miracle of living
continues...



BATTLEFIELD by: Sherry Williamson

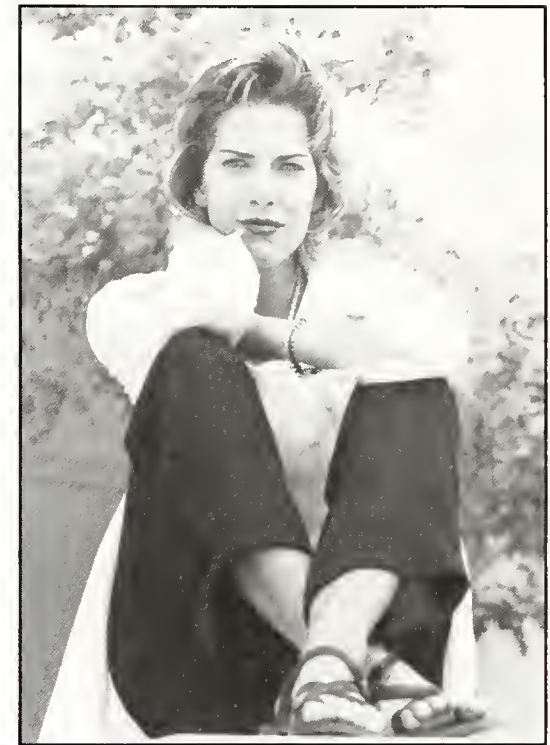


Holly Cooper
19

"Look around. Reality is more fascinating,
more beautiful, more frightening, than
anything I could ever think up."
pgs. 49, 57

Jennifer Huleh-Day
26

"If you have an idea, pursue it. You might
stumble onto some great accident."
pgs. 20, 51, 60



Sherry Williamson
22

"All great beauty must have some element of strangeness in it."
...Sir Francis Bacon
pg. 31

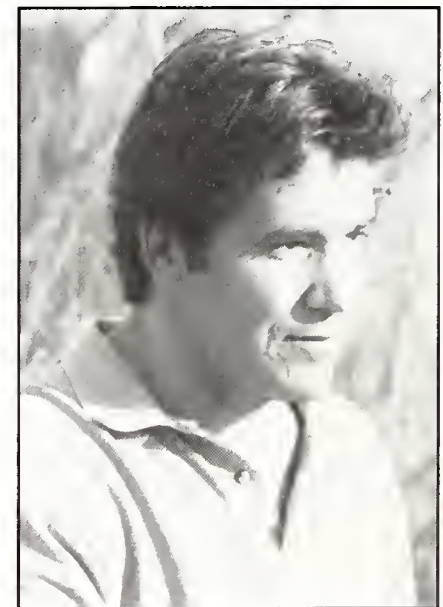


Teri Lurie
30

"My inspiration is Imogene Cunningham. She
was ahead of her time."
pg. 29

Tim Barbini
31

"Capture things forever as they are at that
moment."
pgs. 1, 36, 47, 64





Lali Flores
30-something
"Keep trying to improve yourself and
enhance your life."



Zabrina Carpio
21
"Don't let people take your dreams from you."
pg. 23



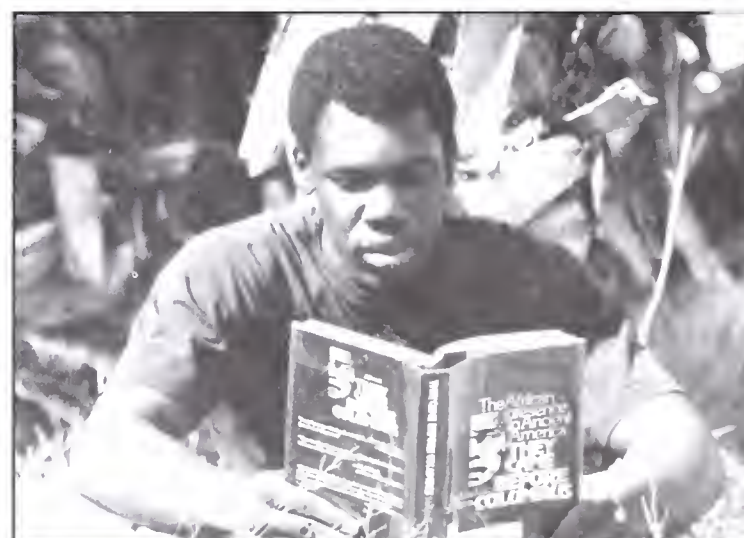
Ravinderjit Singh
22
"Never lose sight of the importance of time spent with
family and friends."
pgs. cover, 52



Dave Barry
26
"Anyone can put words together.
Someday, I hope to express
something through mine."
pg. 17

Lee Francis II
23

"I'd like to write a few novels."
pgs. 36, 61



The King and I

by: Sharon A. Leonard

It's been another grueling day. First Melissa needed cookies for school (Please, Mommy!), then Erica had to have a lift to class (I can't be late!). Tom pouted through breakfast because baking cookies took the time he wanted for an early morning quickie (Jesus! You know I'm hot in the morning). All this before work—too much work. Damn, I'm tired. I've been a grown-up all day!

I need to go backwards. The kids are out, Tom's at the club, the answering machine is on. Oh joy! I can do it now—nobody will know. Where is that nightie? Not that sexy one. Not that expensive one. Not that rag. I'll kill that kid if she took—she'd better stay out of my —ah! here it is. You're looking good Elvis. Wait, let me shower. I'd die if my body wasn't clean for you. Better! Oh, you feel so good on me. Now where are those trashy magazines? Great! Look at these headlines: "The King is Not Dead." "Elvis Sighted in N.J. Grand Union." A little "Love Me Tender" on the stereo. Dreams.

Meeting him, the King, I boldly open my shirt, my white cotton bra pulled down to make room for his autograph. He smiles, slow and sexy. The pen is lost in his big fist. My breasts look so little, but he doesn't mind. He's touching me! Oh God! I feel it—the pen branding my flesh

E-L-V-I-S P-R-E-S-L-E-Y

I wish his name was longer, or written in Chinese characters, or Braille, or anything that would make this moment last.



DANNY BOY by: Robyn Cicero

Let Me Be

by: Lee Francis II

Let me be
When a ballad doth squeeze a tear
Or loneliness whispers in my ear
Should my teardrops nourish a smile
Or frown doth linger for a while.

Let me be
And let just my skin feel the wind blow
As toes play with sand below
Waves tap my feet as they run back home
Pounding stares on my unveiled form search and roam.

Let me be when songs of my heart doth break
And dimensions of my skin doth shake
It escorts gloom from my guts pit
To Battle the evil of loves evil hit.

Let me be
And question after my life
My nobility in battling a sea of strife
Or ponder me brave or hero of wars
To dodge yet rob fortunes arrows of scars

Let me be
When to sleep I wish to submit
And dream not of life or death but an exit
Not allowing conscience to make a coward of me
Or ever hear me beg fear some pitiful plea.

Let me be
Let me be if I want to be with sleep
For my promises I cannot keep
Trace the journey of tears as I weep my sea
Let me dream. Let me rest. Let me be. Let me be.



CUPS by: Tim Barbini

Untitled

by: William Merenda

Intro to Introductions
How to schedule classes
How to spel
Gooder grammer
Adv Counting
Smiley face 101
Cool-Stuffology
Groovy-Stuffology (history)
The study of scabs
Illogic
The study of today's date
Licking plug sockets
Bad Humor
Kilts
Experimental labotimics
Tree licking (Part II to Plug socket licking)
Holding other people's breath
Using Exit signs
The proper way to stub your toe
Counting grass (Part II to Adv Counting)
Nonsense (Part II to Illogic)
XTPQRNM (Part II to Nonsense)
Nothingology
Study of Homo Erectus-Heh Heh Heh!
Good...uh , words
Making fun of teachers
"Faces of Death"
Ugly people
Urinology
Discussing sielence
Cooking ice
Deep cement diving
Disobeying survival skills
Cancelling class 101

Under the Blue Carribbean Sea

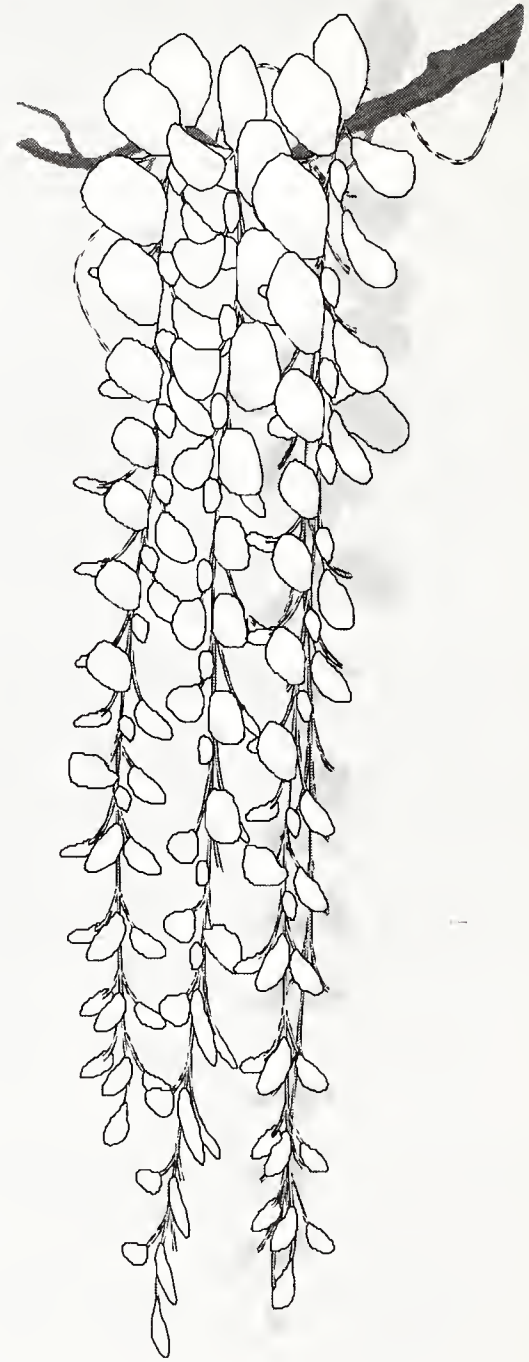
by: Jean Watson Francois

There is, under the Blue Caribbean Sea,
the reflection of a faded flower.
Haiti, a beauty that is burning
Everyday we state with acerbity
the struggle for a better life,
the cry for progress and dignity.
There is, under the Blue Caribbean Sea,
One life and thousands of people.
Crying is becoming more meaningless
Who doesn't understand or doesn't hear?
A bird flies and reaches a branch!
A man cries and doesn't get liberty!
There is, under the Blue Caribbean Sea,
the picture of dead flowers,
the wind blows away all hopes,
We travel beyond the horizon.
We are buried deeply in trouble.
Who is going to lead us into the future?
There is, under the Blue Caribbean Sea,
One voice, one nation, one country.
Haiti, one beauty that is burning.

wRites of Spring

The following works are the winners of BBC North Campus's Fifth Annual "wRites of Spring" contest. This year's theme is "Film as Literature", and the following were the featured guest speakers:

- * Greg Eisman: "*Apocalypse Now* and *The Maltese Falcon*"
- * David Plumb: "'A Good Man is Hard to Find' and *Badlands*"
- * Cheedy Jaja: "African American Caricature"
- * Outside Guest of Honor, Delbert Mann, Academy Award winning director of *Marty* (1955)



Rainbow Woman

by: Shelagh F. Mullins

My feet are firmly planted in the ground —
Sensible and practical, I travel a worn path.
I make my living processing other people's words,
While many of my own remain unformed and unsaid.

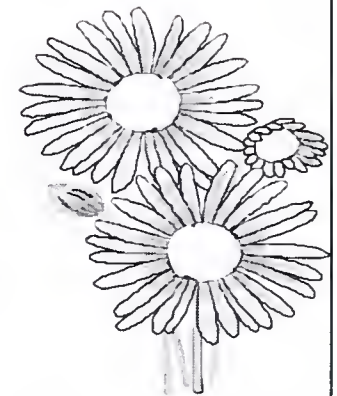
My head, meanwhile, is often at a higher altitude,
In ethereal clouds where the silence sings
Of a world waiting to be born
And, yet, that has always been.

In my day-to-day persona, I tell you,
"What you see is what you get:
A serious square mother sister daughter
Hard-working upstanding Black woman."

I am a rainbow woman, containing in my veins
The blood of four continents.
I am a mango tree whose sweet fruit and leaves
Freely and joyfully give succor and shade.

I am a flute playing a lyrical song
Like some Pied Piper to set the children free;
I am a crystal, whose fragments and shards
Embrace a vision of our shared karma.

Why did my spirit choose a life on earth
At just this time, in just this place?
As we inexorably move toward the millennium
My mission, like a treasure, like yours, waits...



Untitled

by: Chris Muhlenfeld

It starts: (l'hôpital).
Born into its
]ESTABLISHED[
oily cog
mechanical bowels.

The warm salty innocence
suckles nourishment
from battery acid breast milk.

Baby blood
slowly mutates to vitriolic ooze.
contaminated:
poisoned
By mother's instinctive
self-fulfilling needs.
(all their good intentions)

Screaming fear infant helpless
slips confusion
yet -
soon enough -
tools arrive:

Duplicity:
Nursery rhymes bombard/
dosages vary:
The daily images
of underlying hate.

(Rest assured, wonderful machine;
your clockwork is precision)

Spoiled blood kicks in:

child catches on.
stays between the lines
{ while venting }
crayola color conditioning.

Installing the innate:
red white & blue
sister machine gun
satellite murder):
True love is to hate

Locked into cycle:
cycling away/

faulty coGnition:
love resides
in the security
of the machine's oiled bowels.

chained by
mile long leash/

Room enough for most to wander.
Others more ambitious,
(stray too far) - - -

(for them,
leash yanks:

chokes.

RE minds
where love
resides.



A Review of Bernard Rose's

Immortal Beloved

by: Oliver Moor

Bernard Rose's *Immortal Beloved* is a fine attempt to show the viewer the world of the musical genius. Musical biographies are not unusual: Ken Russell has made several (*The Music Lovers*, *Lisztomania*, etc.); Milos Forman's *Amadeus* enjoyed great success (in terms of both box office and awards). It seems to be the case, however, that movies that succeed as accurate biographies fail as entertainment, and vice versa. This is one that succeeds as both. It is achingly romantic and moving, looks fantastic, and does not entirely "let the truth get in the way of a good story."

The genius in question is one of the greatest of all, Ludwig Van Beethoven. After Beethoven's death a will is found apparently leading everything he ever wrote or owned to his "immortal beloved" — the will, however, does not reveal who this is. The basic premise of the movie is for Anton Schindler, Beethoven's kindly faced though much-abused secretary, to find this woman. There appears to Schindler to have been two significant loves in the maestro's life. We learn from the second, (Countess Anna Marie Erdody, played by Isabella Rossellini) that there is an unexpected third. It is she whom Beethoven has described as "my angel, my all, my other self."

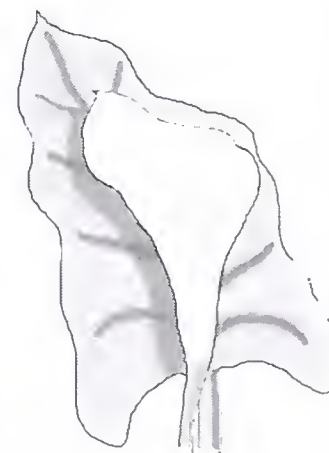
Most of the movie is filmed in extended flashbacks. We see the young Beethoven (Gary Oldman) as an exuberant, bold, and idealistic man, who has the pick of just about any woman he wishes. Even those who find him boorish and rude soon fall under the spell of his charisma. Oldman is excellent in this role: irascible yet charming, intense yet morose, he seems almost to grow physically to fill the part. Later in the film Oldman is equally convincing as an irate, bitter old man, whose deafness has made him oblivious to the fact that his young protégé, Karl, does not have the talent to become a

great musician. Oldman is even convincing in his piano playing: very often, it seems, when actors are called on to simulate playing an instrument they look somewhat ridiculous (Rossellini's inability, for example, to look like a violinist, irritate. Not being able to play an instrument is fine, but why bother to show the fact? If she couldn't ride a horse she would not be seen falling off one. This may be nit-picking, but the rest of the movie looks so good it seems a pity that such shots should have gotten to spoil it.)

For the most part, however, it is the cinematography that makes this film. The settings (both the natural settings and the great chateaux in which much of the action occurs) are magnificently depicted in all the opulence (although most of the scenes were filmed in the Czech Republic rather than Germany or Austria). One particular shot, which has been widely commented on, is of the young Beethoven floating in a lake — apparently in an infinite field of stars. Accompanying this stunning image is the overwhelming chorus from the *Ninth Symphony*. Never before has it sounded more glorious. At last the memories of its use in Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange* are vanquished.

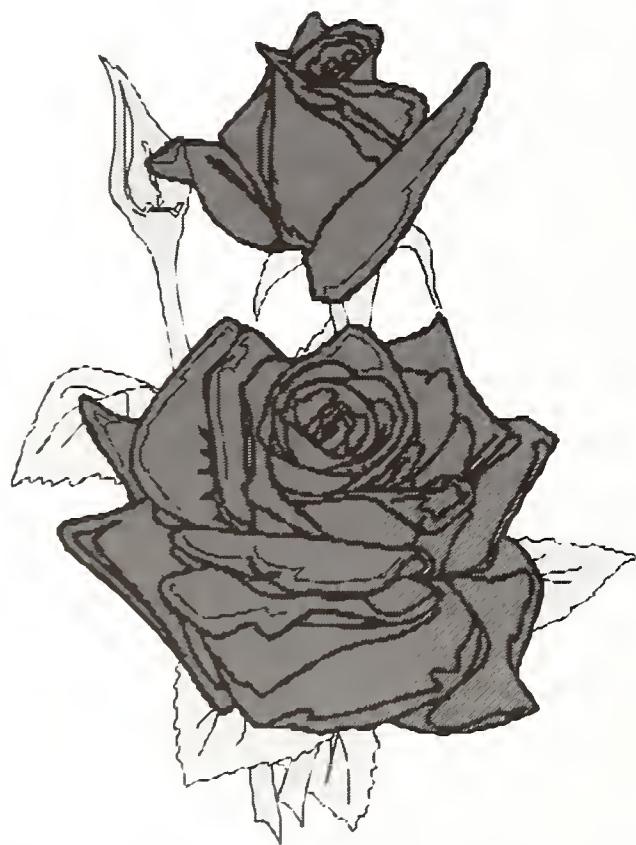
Obviously important, in any movie about a composer, is the music itself. With such a splendid library of work to choose from, the makers were spoiled for choice; they have wisely chosen not to use huge chunks of the *Fifth* or *Sixth Symphonies* (memorably crucified in *Fantasia*). Instead a mixture of the popular (the "Ode to Joy" and "Emperor" Concerto) and lesser-known (the "Kreutzer" Sonata), amongst others, have been used. The music's quality is excellent throughout, as should be expected from Sir Georg Solti.

The nature of genius is so remote to most of us that the only way we can understand it is through a more "human" element, such as love. Although the noblest of emo-



tions, love is not as easily understandable as other, baser, qualities. *Immortal Beloved*, in using this theme as its main emotional" hook: is not as readily appreciated as, for example, *Amadeus*, (the film against which it will most likely be compared), which uses jealousy as its theme: the movie's conflict is not as defined, and as pure entertainment, therefore, it is not quite as fulfilling. For me, however, it is still an outstanding film. It also answers a question which has puzzled me for years. In an exchange between Beethoven and Schindler, Beethoven asks "What does it [music] do?"; Schindler replies "It exalts the soul." "Utter nonsense..." says Beethoven. "It is the power of music to carry one directly into the mental state of the composer." At last! a tangible reason to listen to music. As a child, practicing the piano for hour after hour, I had no idea what

I was trying to achieve. Now it has been explained. Why didn't anyone tell me earlier?



Echo

by: Brad Haarer

This	is	as	love	is	as	life
is	as	this	is	as	time	is
as	tide	is	as	hope	is	as
fear	is	as	pain	is	as	birth
is	as	death	is	as	flight	is
as	wind	is	as	motion	is	as
water	is	as	longing	is	as	God
is	as	good	is	as	evil	is
as	this	is	as	that	is	as
flesh	is	as	blood	is	as	poetry
is	as	now	is	as	then	is
as	here	is	as	there	is	as
time	is	as	breath	is	as	nothing
						ever
						will
						be
						again.

Confessions of a *Marxist*

by: Valerie Helles

"Will you marry me? Did he leave you any money?
Answer the second question first." — Groucho Marx

"Eh, you act-a crazy, what's-a matter for you?" — Chico Marx

" — Harpo Marx

Some films touch our deepest emotions; some inspire us to noble causes. Hollywood has given us many meaningful films — but forget about them for awhile. Not that I'm against emotions or noble causes — but everybody needs a reprieve from cares and worries, and who can worry while watching Harpo Marx merrily plunge feet-first into a tank full of lemonade or Groucho glibly throwing out more insults than Heinz has beans? Spend *A Day at the Races* or *A Night at the Opera*; the Marx Brothers' pure, child-like craziness invites the rational side of the brain to take a welcome rest.

Deep inside, maybe we all have a secret lunatic waiting to get out. Who wouldn't like to get away with the insults that Groucho did? In the ancient days of royal courts, the jester was the only one who could put down everyone from the noble ladies to the king himself, often exerting a subtle political influence — all while making people laugh. Groucho Marx fit that archetypal pattern like a glove — as with the jester, nothing was sacred. "I could dance with you 'til the cows come home — on second thought, I'd rather dance with the cows 'til you come home."

Chico, with his just-off-the-boat broken English, perhaps reminded us where we came from, with his hilarious misuse of the

English language. For a nice Jewish boy from the East Side, his immigrant character sounded more Italian than any Vinnie or Antonio. "How-a we gonna get outta heah?" he says to Harpo in *Horsefeathers*: "You got a rope? Tie-a on-a da bed, throw-a the rope outta da window," so — what else? — Harpo drops his tie on the bed and throws the rope out the window. How easily the obvious becomes the ridiculous.

My personal favorite, Harpo, is like the child in all of us, always getting into something, but innocently lovable — steals the boxer shorts off anyone, but honks the horn, hitches the leg up and hands him a lollipop. All is forgiven.

Harpo never spoke in character because, by his own account, he simply could not out-talk Groucho and Chico; yet his silence truly was golden. From his rapid-fire slapstick antics to unexpectedly beautiful harp solos, he worked magic without saying a word. The near legendary "mirror scene" in *Duck Soup*, in which Harpo (with glasses and mustache) mimics Groucho, has to be one of the silliest silent pieces ever filmed.

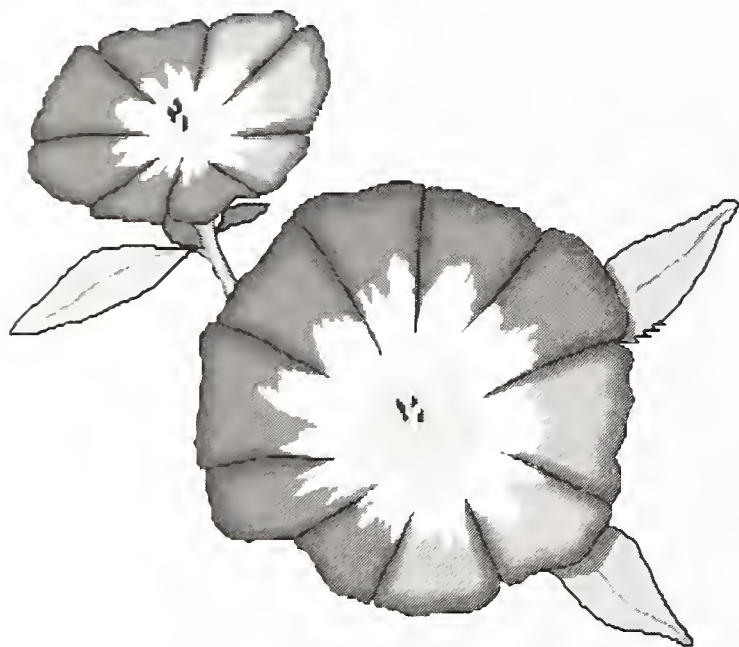
The youngest brother, Zeppo, was much less recognizable, as he did not develop a particular character. Performing only in the earlier films, he served mainly as Groucho's straight man. "Sir," Zeppo says, deadpan, "you're shooting your own men." "Here's five dollars," replies Groucho, "keep it under your hat. Never mind, I'll keep it under *my* hat."

I could, reluctantly, let the rational mind sneak in and dare to say that the Marx Brothers even made some ideological points. In *Duck Soup*, they gleefully — and to music — plunge the tiny nation of Freedonia into war (why? Because Groucho is called an upstart!), chorus-ing, "We got guns — they got guns — all God's children got guns!" The sublime political satire has not lost its punch in sixty years.

The Marx Brothers, with their mile-a-



minute zaniness and marvelous disregard of society's stuffy rules, are still an antidote to the (seriously) insane world. Their manic horse-play is as hilarious today as it was to the audiences of the '30s who would literally fall out of their seats laughing. And so, I invite anyone to let out that inner lunatic. In Groucho's words, "On with the opera — let joy be unconfined! Let there be dancing in the streets, drinking in the saloons and necking in the parlor!" Honk, honk.



The Way It Was for Us

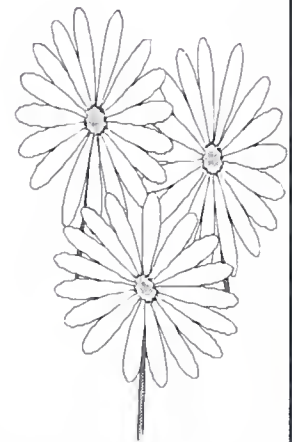
by: Evelyn Weinberg

We walked in the park on pretty days,
played "Ring a Rosy" or worked puzzles
when there were no snowmen to make.
I read his favorite stories to him
until he could repeat them verbatim.
We sang "Bell Bottomed Trousers
Coat of Navy Blue
My Daddy is a sailor ———".
At bedtime we prayed together,
My little son and I,
"Bring our Daddy home safe and sound."
I huddled at the radiator on cold winter nights.
The radio told me of horrors in faraway places.
Of tyrants, of heroes, of tanks, of foxholes,
of germ warfare. Of Kamikazi, of suicide warriors.
The morning paper brought long lists of local
boys, "Killed in Action."
Pictures of youth, dreams and bodies shattered,
to lie in graves on foreign soil.
Some of our own cousins and friends
and friends' children among the dead.
To break the tension, I laughed with Jack Benny
with Fibber McGhee and Molly, even Amos 'n Andy.
We knew it was a "right" war.
Once we had laughed at the buffoon
with the crazy haircut, the lice comb mustache,
sputtering in Tourette speak.
With hate as his accomplice
he would capture the world.
And it was coming to pass.

We wrote to our loved ones overseas
as they fought the war that would
"Live In Infamy."
Our hearts broke at G.I. letters returned
stamped in bold letters, DECEASED.
"Your letters could slip by the censors."
we were cautioned. "Tell nothing.
You never know who might be a spy."
We were afraid to breathe a word
of the innocent letters we received.
We didn't understand atomic warfare.
The word nuclear was not yet part of our vocabulary.
Hiroshima was only the name of a place.

The magic day came!
It would end soon!
AT LAST!
The whole front page was a mushroom cloud.
Daddy would soon be coming home!
I fed my little son a bit of rationed meat,
saved the tin from canned peas,
washed the can carefully,
stamped it down with new hope.
Soon the neat piles of carefully flattened,
sorted tin would no longer be needed
for the war effort.

Much later came the pictures.
Flaming children fleeing bombs.
The thought of their maimed bodies
haunts us now.
We didn't know she was named the Enola Gay
that dreadful plane of destruction.
It was all over before we began to learn truths.
The extent of the atrocities of concentration



camps.
The mountains of emaciated bodies.
Of Gas chambers, of whole families wiped out.
Of indignities, of medical experiments.
Of torture.
It is much later that tough Russian soldiers,
the first liberators,
tell of mass graves of children,
stacked in Germanic order,
according to their years of birth.
And these hardened men tell of weeping then
As they weep in the telling today.

So pass your judgments.
You who came after it all.
Tell us we were wrong to rejoice
at the end of it.

History tells a different story than mine.
We only knew what we knew then.
What we felt. The loneliness.
The fear and sorrow that stalked us.
The lives lost.
We knew it had to come to an end.



Mystic People

by: Lali Flores

AWAKEN, mystic woman
The earth pleads for your embrace.
She longs to hear a spirit song
A healing whisper to the wind.

Too long she's heard the cry of innocence
The spill of blood taints the land.
Poisons fed into her streams
Her forest failed, creatures gone.

For he who comes from sky and sun,
ALONE, cannot complete the task
The secret lies in opposites,
UNITED, on a single path.

AWAKEN, MYSTIC PEOPLE
The time has come for you to act.



UNTITLED by: Tim Barbini

Compassion

by: Gerard Puciello

I Bleed.

I bleed for the mother and father who bury their young, or who are told their child may not be quite right. I bleed for the wandering souls who carry their hurt like a towering inferno. I bleed for the ones who work themselves to the marrow because they know no other way but survival. I bleed for the ones who hold a daily vigil for the long ago loves who aren't coming back. I bleed for the ones who think it's too late for a difference. I bleed for the bigots who view difference as weakness. I bleed for the lips that have never felt another, or thought they never need another. I bleed for the children who know nothing but anguish.

I bleed because I am Compassion. If you're having a difficult task locating my existence, it's because I've been shoved back in the corner by Inconsiderate, Unkind, Impolite, and Discourteous. My importance seems reduced to the size of a grain of sand, threatened by the incoming tide. Please, don't be afraid to pass the word I exist, God knows I could use the company.

I am as easily learned as hate, maybe not as glorious, but with redeeming qualities. And if you won't pass me by, I could teach you and be forever in your mind.

I'll keep on bleeding because this is a life sentence, a malignancy. What I need is assistance.

Communion

by: Holly Cooper

As I drive through the darkness
of the Minnesota night,
the pale moon
bathes
my old friend, melancholy
in a phosphorescent light,
but somehow misses me.

I see
an old tribal chief
on the shoulder of the road.

I stop,

drawn in by his face
marred by wrinkles,
yet his muscles still sleek
not withered by life.

Drawing a knife
made of metal and bone,
he slices through my palm.
His face,
expressionless,
like stone.
Into a small silver cup,
the ruby of life leaks.

He speaks:
"Take and drink
of your own essence.

Like the hawk
of the air
and the wolves
of the night,
he must taste his own blood
to find his true self,
the inner light."

His voice radiates wisdom and might
as he presses the cup to my lips.
I take hesitant sips.
"Drink deeply my friend
and remember your taste,
your smell,
and understand what you are.
You are a bear
of the wood,
a creature
of the wild.

You are strength."

As I drive through the darkness
of the Minnesota night,
the pale moon
bathes
my new friend
power
in radiant light
and ignites me.

Ancestor
by: Crystal Lamb

Her celestial beauty
is lost to the ages.
The perfect reflection
returned to dust.
Once radiant,
her golden light
turned to silver
and tarnished.
Wreaths and garlands
that once marked her path
have dried up and blown away.
Gone for a millennium,
more than her myth remains.
Like a star gone supernova,
her light will shine
long after she's gone.



NIKI by: Jennifer Huleh-Day

*Free Your Mind**



ZEBRA MAZE by: Ravinderjit Singh

Stripper
(with apologies to Robert Francis)
by: Crystal Lamb

Her art is exotic striptease, her aim
How to hit the mark she seems not to aim at,

Her passion how to entice his advance,
Her technique how to please the audience.

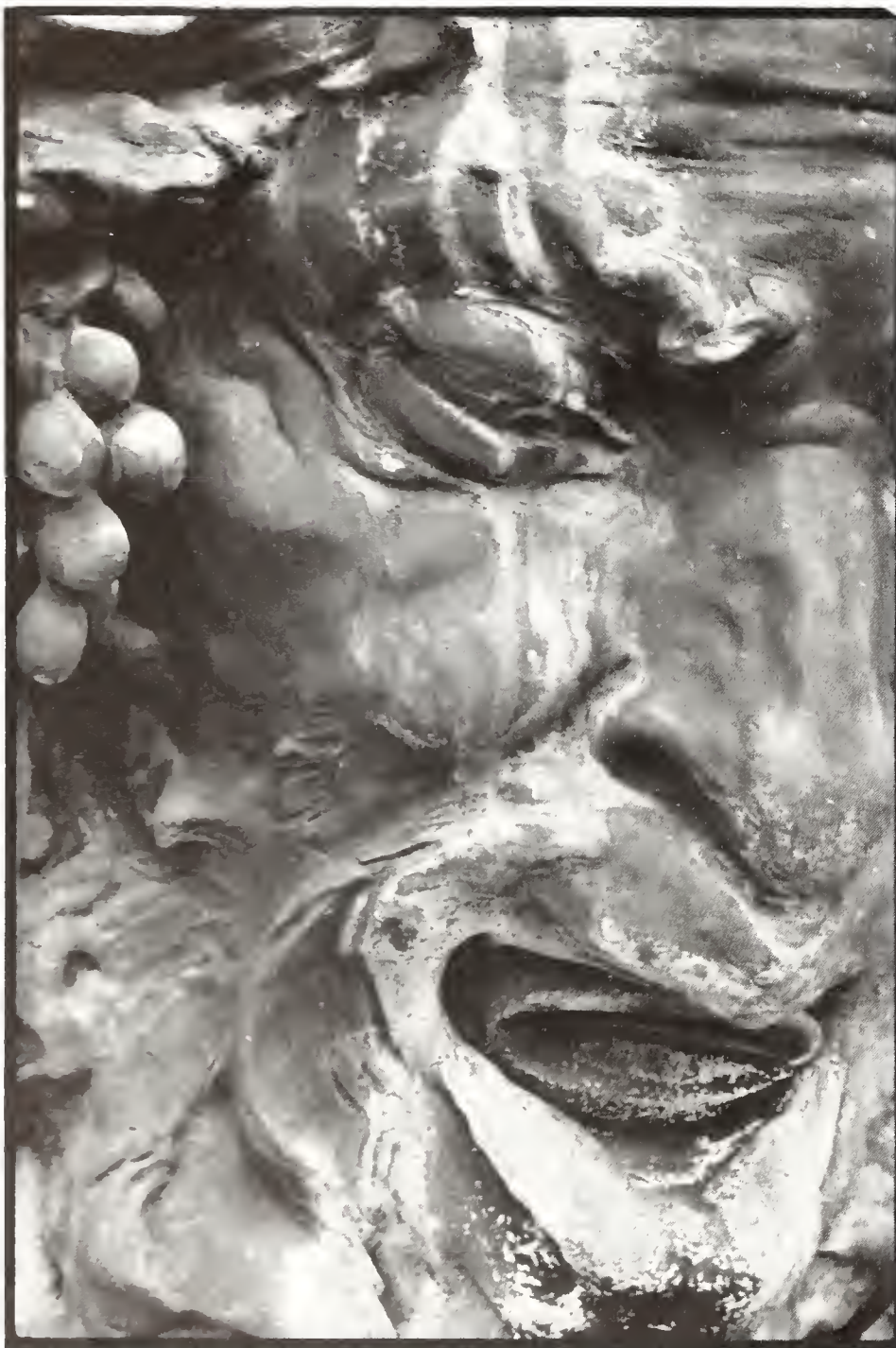
The others aren't to be comprehend. She
Goes to men and acts misunderstood.

Yet not too much. Not errant, arrant, wild,
But all the men become beguiled.

An act, is what, she won't communicate
Making the customer understand too late.



UNTITLED by: Suzette Lefebvre



Muse

by: Cheryl Bringas

You monopolize
my thoughts.
My desires
entangle at your touch.

I am your prey.
Hunt me down—
pin me
with your strength.
Trap me
with your scent.
Still me
with your eyes—
like a deer on a dark road
trapped in headlights
of an approaching car.

Run me over—
slam me—
pound me—
do it now!
My breath is dissipating.
I am running
out of time.



Roasting Green Chile

by: Lali Flores

LONG, GREEN CHILES
HANG FROM ROWS
OF SHIMMERING PLANTS.
PICK ONE, TWO.....
MANY BASKETS FULL.

SIDE BY SIDE ON A
MAKESHIFT GRILL THEY
ROAST WHILE SIZZLING
SOUNDS AND PLEASING
AROMAS MESMERIZE THE
SOUL.

YOUNG AND OLD TAKE PART
IN THE RITUAL PEELING
OF BROWNISH BURNT SKIN,
EXPOSING THE WARMTH
OF FLESH WITHIN.

TWO EARTHEN VESSELS
FILLED TO ABUNDANCE,
ONE FOR THE PRESENT,
THE OTHER WHEN WINTER'S
COLD FINGER TAPS AT
OUR DOOR.

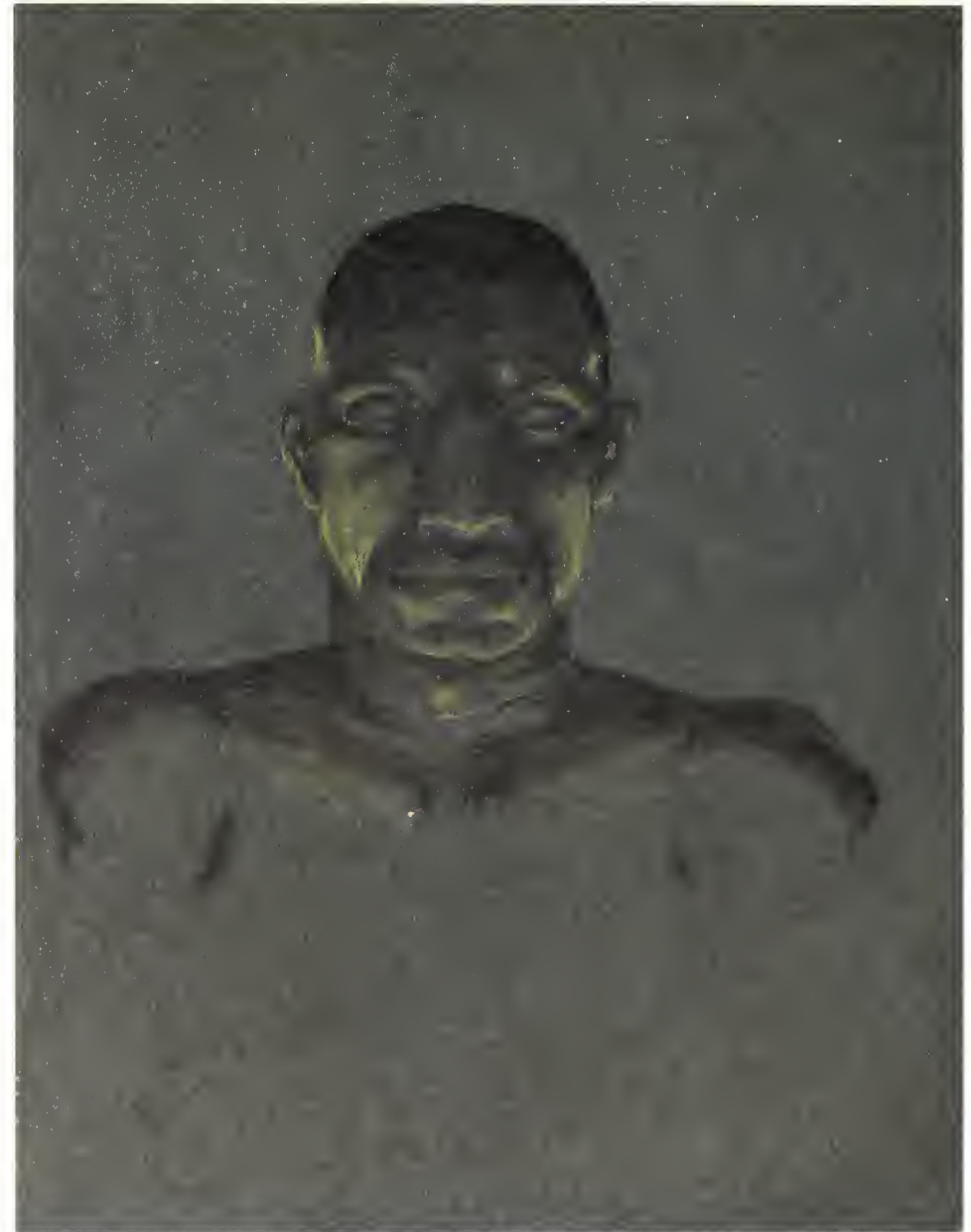


JUAN by: Yvonne Vazquez

Justice Waterfall

by: Jennifer Sawyer

Today's lesson: slavery's mask
The mask slips on with the first poem read
My scalp tingles like the pain
of a slave's aching head
thrown upon a wooden deck
feet bounded, mouth gagged
Traveling beyond empathy, glimpsing "true" history
Tears flowing black for an hour
Becoming One
Locked in an oppression shower
Stolen, yanked from familiarity
Nature's healing of tender family
Forced to abide stifling rules...
Suffocating!
Hidden from old traditions and knowledge
Feeling lost: by God abandoned
Only in the anonymity of night... a whisper
O' Lord, why this wrath are we subjected?
Pain, humiliation constantly afflicted,
Our only companion, confidant: prayer
We reunite with faith in your power
You will sedate, harness the lion,
Free us, lead us out of his lair
We will be a model of patience
An example to All
No man can extinguish
Almighty God's justice waterfall!
Ashamed, prejudiced America will lose.
Awakened, a generation more "free"
Inspired, fueled by ancestral memory
Will erase the stench of oppression...
Spray the perfume of balmy liberty.



KNIGHT OF PENTACLES by: Mark Jette

The Color of Passion

by: Holly Cooper

Two bodies merging,
melting into one.
Flesh on flesh,
black on white.
A mixture of sweat and passion.

The look in their eyes,
brown and green.
The feel of the room.

Hot.

Suppressed primal urges
rise
to the surface.

The passion ends.
The words begin.

She sighs,
and reaches to turn off the light.

In the dark,
they are the same color.

And in the light,
they are beautiful.



Welcome to the Club

by: James Fender

Scott Murphy suddenly realized that he was walking alone. Only problem was that he didn't even remember leaving the hospital until that very moment. Scott had to get out of there. He just couldn't take the quiet, almost dead, waiting room. Scott knew though, that he wouldn't be out for very long. His wife Emily, lay in the hospital awaiting the birth of their first child.

That's not what was bothering Scott. When Emily was rushed to the hospital with contractions, the doctors had discovered that Emily was bleeding internally. At first the doctors couldn't find where the bleeding was coming from until they did x-rays. The x-ray showed a small bullet lodged in the lower part of her back. The doctors feared that removing it may do damage to the birth of the child as well as the mother. But, not operating could do just as much damage. For the time being all the doctors could do was wait.

Scott wasn't even aware that she had been shot. When he was able to visit her in the room, she looked very weak. The pain was taking its toll on her. He sat down on the chair beside her bed. He just stared at her. He loved her so much. Scott just didn't know what he would ever do without her. "If there was only a way I could help you," he said softly. He closed his eyes then heard her mumble something. Scott jumped up almost scaring himself in the process. He leaned as close as possible to Emily hoping to hear her this time.

"Help me. Be there for me. Help," she whispered.

Emily fell back to sleep. He knew he couldn't bother her anymore. She was just too tired. As he made his way out of the room he saw one of the nurses attending to Emily. She suggested that he take a walk around the hospital just to get some fresh air. He knew he had to get out. The stress was getting to him.

That had been some time ago. Dazed and confused when he left the hospital, Scott still wasn't sure just how long he had been out walking. Time had no meaning and he wasn't sure of the day or the

time or the place. He was lost. He looked around to try to get a sense of where he might be. Scott noticed that he was standing in front of a restaurant called The Club. This was the place where Scott had taken Emily on their first date. She had insisted on going to The Club because it was a special place for her and she wanted Scott to learn to love this place as much as she did.

The Club was much more than just a restaurant. It had history behind its outer walls. In the days of prohibition, The Club was "the place to be" and many gang related incidents had taken place there. All the big Mafia leaders used to come to The Club for a nice evening of dinner and dancing. Of course, it was a known fact that they frequented The Club, and one could predict trouble might happen at any time. It made things very interesting for ordinary people and The Club became a very popular place.

Scott stood there for a moment. He was about to turn and head back toward the hospital, but decided to go in The Club for just a moment as a gesture on Emily's account. He opened the front door and walked toward the man standing at the podium. Scott was only going to ask the gentleman to look around for a moment when the man said, "Good evening, Mr. Murphy. Your table has been reserved for you as usual." Scott looked at him confused for a second. Many questions flowed through his mind: "How did he know my name? When did I make reservation here?"

"Are you all right Mr. Murphy," the man asked. Scott just shook his head. There was too much happening to him to be thinking straight. "Mr. Murphy, our table boy will show you to your table. Enjoy your dinner," the man said. Scott could see the young man standing behind the host waiting to take Scott to his table.

They had walked upstairs, Scott following close behind. There was something strange about what was happening. Nothing looked right. Everything looked so old, like something out of the Fifties. Nothing was making sense to Scott. He sat down next to the rail that over looked a dance stage. Scott never remembered any dance stage at the club.

He looked back and saw a little girl playing around the table

next to his. She was a cute little girl with her hair pulled straight down. Her hair swung long and brown as she turned each corner. There was something familiar about the girl. Then her mother looked up, "Emily you come and sit down this instant."

Scott was stunned. It wasn't possible! This wasn't the same girl that he was married to! No, his Emily was back in the hospital. This was just some girl that looked like her at that age. He looked over at the parents. He was close with Emily's parents. Scott had known Mary and Richard Holland since he dated Emily several years before.

As he looked closer his eyes opened wide. It was Mary. It had to be. The woman looked at him with curiosity, "Sir, do I know you?" she asked.

"I'm sorry. I thought that I knew you," he said, not wanting to draw attention. "May I ask? What is your daughter's name?" He just wanted to know. He would feel better knowing that it wasn't her.

"Her name is Emily Holland," she said.

Scott was confused. How could this be happening. "Here in front of me is my wife as a little girl. I must be going crazy," he said to himself. He noticed that Mary was still staring at him, "Oh, she's a doll. You must be very proud," he said to her. She nodded at him in appreciation. Scott turned away and looked toward the stage trying to gather his thoughts about what was happening.

There was suddenly a loud commotion coming from down stairs. The commo-

tion turned into screams as gunfire erupted. Scott leaned across the rail trying to get a look. He could see people running back into the dance floor. They must have been running from whoever was firing the gun. Then he saw a man run to the dance floor waving something in his hand. That was him! What was Scott going to do? Leaving the balcony area set him right in front of the gunman. He looked over his shoulder at the little girl. Scott saw that she was leaning over the rail just as he was. He had to get her back before she was seen by the man below.

Scott wished he had been a step quicker. He watched Emily pick something off the table next to her and throw it. He watched the object fly through the air, then strike the man with the gun. Everyone tried to escape and began to run as the man hit the floor.

People were scrambling to get out. Fear was on all those trying to run by him. The man stood back up and looked toward Emily. The child just stared smiling at the crazed man below. Scott watched as Mary was trying to get to her daughter, but knew that she would never get there fast enough. He began to run toward Emily hoping that he was fast enough to get her down. Scott looked back at the man and saw him raising his gun at the girl. Scott dove at the girl and hit her as he heard the next shot from the gun. As he hit the floor he felt the burning in his side from the bullet. He looked at the girl, "Are you all right?" The girl looked scared but okay. Scott

felt better knowing that she was fine.

Suddenly someone screamed and Scott turned to see that the man had climbed the side of the balcony. Scott stood feeling the pain in his side. He grabbed the madman's gun and wrestled with him. The man punched Scott in the area that the bullet had hit. Scott limped over in pain. He felt that he was going to pass out. Scott looked up at the man and saw rage in the man's eyes.

It was now or never for Scott. He stood up waiting for the man to move in again. Just as the man did, Scott bent over and lifted the man over his shoulder. The man screamed out in fear as his body carried over the rail and on to the floor below. The impact was instant as the man's head hit the wood floor. Scott fell to the ground trying to catch his breath. He looked over and saw the little girl being held by her mother. They looked toward him. He tried to smile but everything was becoming blurry. He just wanted to close his eyes and rest. Suddenly he could hear his name being called out. Scott found it difficult to open his eyes. He was just too weak.

As he heard his name again, he opened his eyes. A nurse stared at him in the face. "Are you all right?" she asked. Scott stood and looked around as though he had no idea where he was. Scott just looked at the woman as though she wasn't even there.

"How's my wife?" he finally asked. He then stood up and headed down the hallway. The nurse didn't know what to say to him and stopped to gather her thoughts. Scott stopped

and looked back at the short woman. "Well?" he asked. The nurse just smiled at him.

"It had to be a miracle," she said. "The doctors had decided to operate, and when they did, gone. The bullet was there and then it was gone, like magic," she described.

Scott's heart began to race very fast. Was everything that had just happened to him for real? Had he really helped his wife as he wanted to so badly. He began to feel very nervous as he stood just outside her door. He stood terrified that if he went inside he would be back where he was before with his wife and baby's life in danger. Scott tapped the door softly realizing what he had to do.

Scott slowly opened the door to the room. He peeked his head in trying to be very quiet. He could see Emily sitting there smiling. In her arms was a small baby wrapped in a pink blanket. Quietly, Emily said, "Thank you for being there." All Scott could do was cry.



JIMBO by Jennifer Huleh-Day

Run

by: Lee Francis II

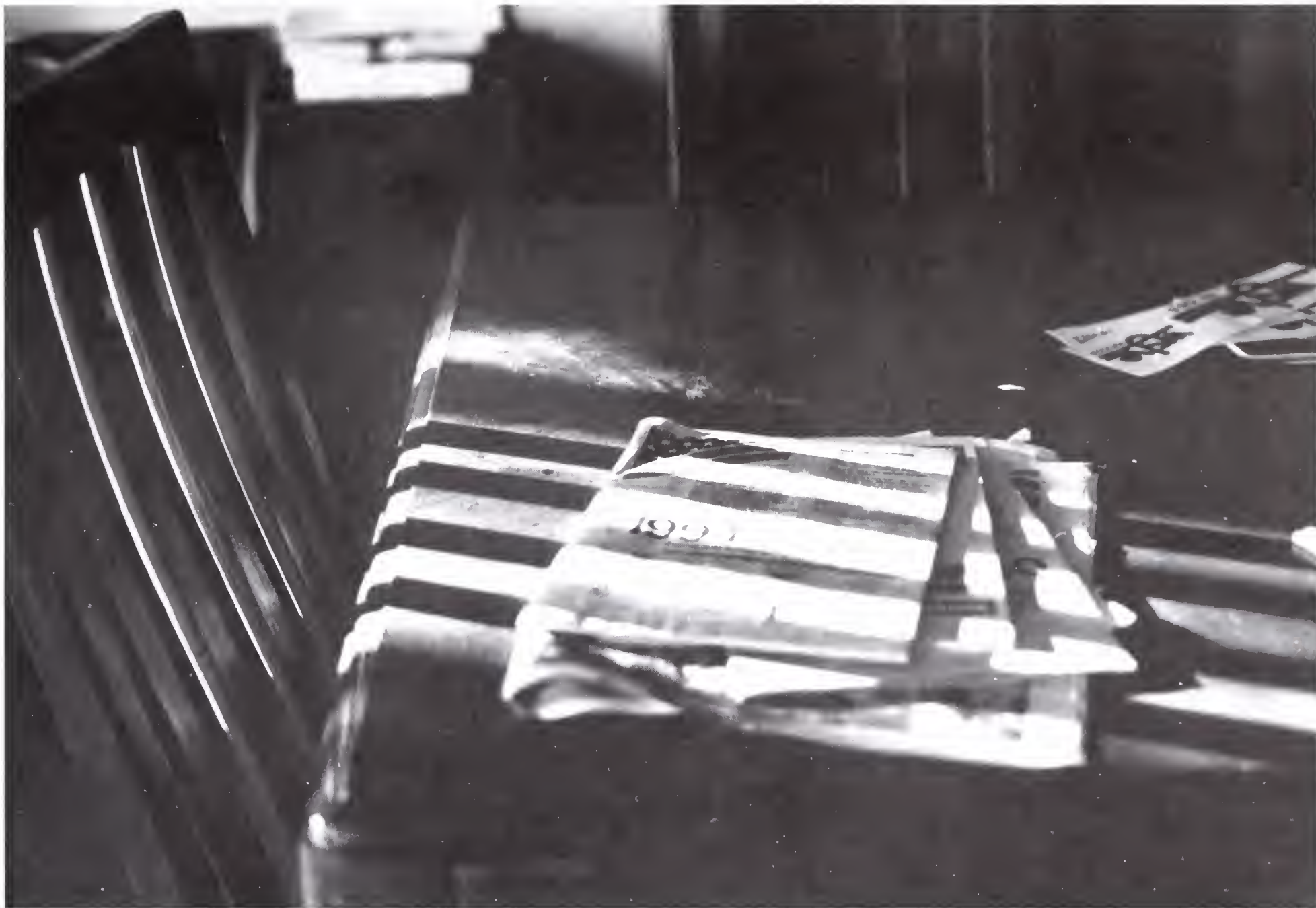
Do you know what it's like to be chased,
Hunted, to be
Wanted dead?
Do you know what it's like to be on the run
Where the second thing on your mind is to
Enact the age old drama of self preservation
And run.
And the next thing on your mind is to
Run faster?
So you run rhythmically, racing rapidly
Until you reach,
Reach the end of the Earth
Do you know what it's like to feel the warmth of
Bullets passing you by
To have the entire perception of your environment
Enlarged by thousands,
To be able to discern between shade and shadow,
To see your liquid of life leaving limitlessly
And think nothing of it because
The next thing on your mind is
To run even faster?
Do you know what it's like to
Be able to
See the tragedy,
Smell the fear,
Taste the destruction,
Feel the beat,
To sense the danger
And hear the battle cry
But just retreat?

To dodge in dense darkness
Knowing that when they see you
It's with your best foot forward
And one foot raised in flight.
You feel eyes on
Your back and you make moves on faith
Hoping that no one saw you.
You never realized that your body was so remarkable
But you don't have time for that now
Because that would be the fifth thing on
Your mind.
RUN!
Everything seems to be moving
Slower. You're moving so fast that
The only thing keeping up with you
Is sound
The sst, sst, tss, tss, sst snap
Crackling twigs
Shew eh chheew shew crushed leaves
And hhha, ahh-hhha, ahh-hha panting lungs.
After an eternity
You just slow down but
You haven't reached
The end of the world yet,
Instead you've reached the conclusion
That a new world order is
Sweeping the land with the wave
Of emotional terrorism,
But you're still on the run.

The Six O'clock News

by: Sara E. Pearl

emotional black hole
man fights woman (police come)
imploding psychiatric smorgesbord
man kills woman (with gun)
cruise prozac strip
turns self over (law prevails)
jugglers toss your sanity at gunpoint
spends rest of life (in jail)
jitterbugging on tightrope no net
man fights woman (police come)
this time/life/ book of perversities
man kills woman (with gun)
insecurities
man kills self (damage done)
bigotries
turns self over (to supreme ones)
infections
spends rest of death (in the cell)
seducing confusion
back here on earth (in hell)
contorted contradictions conforming
please stay tuned... more news at eleven



THE TAX ALTERNATIVE by: Mark Cleary

Gilded Fantasy

by: Cheryl Bringas

Cellophane orbs
sway drowsily,
their tails strain
against confinement.

Vanilla candles
flicker amidst
pale chrysanthemum
arrangements.

Shards of bronze mirror
cast light
onto tables curtained
in creamy white linen.

Cider-colored liquid
trickles and bubbles itself
over the tiers
of a white-lit fountain.

Myriad amber lights
twinkle playfully
around limbs
of ivory trees.

A swish of satin,
a scent of gardenia,
and she is there,

draped in ivory,
shot with gold.
She tosses her sun-kissed hair
to punctuate her laugh.

Her eyes are blue.



BRIDE by: Tim Barbini

P'an Ku

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